

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2112 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

As you work to finalize the Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations bills, we respectfully request a funding increase of at least 7 percent for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) compared to the Fiscal Year 2009 baseline level.

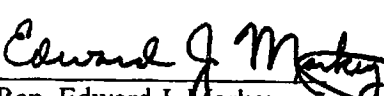
NIH is our nation's preeminent medical research institution and represents our best hope for finding cures, improving treatments, and gaining a better understanding of the diseases and conditions that affect millions of Americans. NIH research is a critical part of health care reform, strengthening our economy, inspiring the next generation of scientists and researchers, and maintaining our nation's leadership in innovation. NIH research is also essential to containing soaring medical costs. Studies show that a substantial portion of projected health care spending comes from expenses associated with managing diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's, stroke, and many other chronic or life-threatening diseases.


As you know, over the past several years, funding for NIH has not kept pace with the costs of conducting biomedical research. As a result, promising research has not been funded, clinical trials have been delayed or terminated, jobs have been lost, and talented young investigators have turned to other careers. The recent boost in NIH funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5) is a very important step toward regaining the lost potential of the last several years. This investment will enable some of the most promising research projects that have long been sidelined to begin; we must not halt this momentum by failing to adequately support the NIH baseline budget.

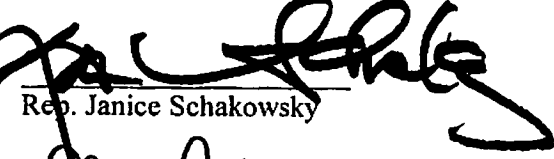
For these reasons we are seeking an increase for NIH of at least 7 percent, with some of us believing that the appropriate funding increase would be as much as 10 percent. This level of funding is essential to sustain advances in science and the economic impacts of NIH-funded research.

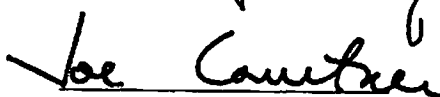
We understand the challenges facing the Appropriations Committee and the difficulty in supporting priority issues with limited resources. Nonetheless, we urge you to consider the wide-ranging, positive effects of investment in research on health and the economy. We appreciate your consideration of our request.


Sincerely,

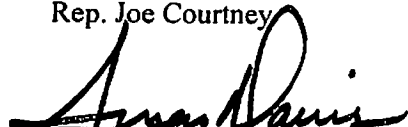

Rep. Edward J. Markey

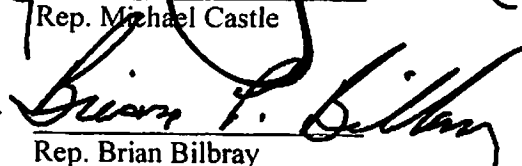

Rep. David G. Reichert


Rep. Janice Schakowsky


Rep. Joe Courtney


Rep. Michael Castle


Rep. Susan Davis



Rep. Brian Bilbray

Rep. Ed Perlmutter

Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr.

Rep. Tammy Baldwin

Rep. Ike Skelton


Rep. Chris Van Hollen

Rep. Donna F. Edwards

Rep. Mike McIntyre

Rep. John McHugh

Rep. Nick Rahall

Rep. Elijah Cummings


Rep. Michael Michaud


Rep. Pete Stark

Rep. Eliot Engel


Rep. Joe Sestak

Rep. Tim Holden

Rep. Mike Thompson

Rep. Bob Etheridge

Rep. Heath Shuler


Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy


Rep. Russ Carnahan